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tations were created. Whatever the verbal limitations, a momentous change in the orientation of British policy had taken place. The era of unfettered self-determination was over, the era of Continental attachments and entanglements had begun. The *Entente Cordiale* was the half-way house between isolation and an alliance ; and such relationships tend to grow more intimate with the passing years.

The Conference of Algeciras, which sat from January to April 1906, was a contest of wills between France, backed by England, Russia and Spain, and Germany, tepidly supported by Austria. Italy, with the secret Tripoli pact in her pocket, gave no help to her ally. The main struggle turned on the plan of Franco-Spanish control of the police in the Moroccan ports, and after weeks of acute tension Berlin gave way. Neither William II nor Biilow wished to fight about Morocco, and Holstein, who was quite prepared to draw the sword, resigned. Though the independence and integrity of Morocco were recognized in the Act of Algeciras and commercial equality was assured, as Germany demanded, it was generally agreed that France had won the match. She had recovered from her attack of nerves in 1905, the growing isolation of Germany was revealed, and the *Entente Cordiale* in the words of Tardieu, passed from the static to the dynamic stage. The new situation naturally afforded greater satisfaction to Paris than to London. Never for a moment did Grey question the utility of the historic reconciliation of 1904, but he was now more fully aware of the price we had paid. We had sacrificed part of our independence, and the baffling problem of recovering the friendship of Germany was complicated by involving us in the traditional quarrels of our new friends.

A British agreement with Russia was the natural sequel to

the agreement with France. Friendly discussions, begun before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war, were resumed after its close in 1905. Memories of the Crimean struggle and of subsequent occasions when war seemed in sight prevented all intimacy, and the Tsarist regime was profoundly repugnant to British ideas. Yet these obstacles were overcome by two other considerations. In the first place both Governments felt the need of removing a dangerous antagonism ; in the second it was highly inconvenient for the old and new friends of France to be on bad terms. Co-operation at Algeciras paved the way for the official discussions between Nicolson, the new Ambassador to St. Petersburg, and the Anglophil